

Helen Millecam Morrill  
Oral History  
April 10, 2008

Interviewer and transcriber: Elaine Carr

Elaine: I am at the home of Helen Morrill to do her oral history. She lives at 338 South Vernal Avenue.

Helen, who were your parents?

Helen: My parents were Jacob Burton Reese. He was born May 20, 1875 in Big Creek Black Hawk, Iowa, to Silas Burton Reese and Helen Josephine Cavett. My mother was Esther Wilhelmina Felt. She was born in Hallock, Kittson, Minn on September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1898, to John Adolf Felt and Marie Augusta Jacobson.

Elaine: When did your parents come to the Uinta Basin?

Helen: They came here about 1927 or 28. I was about two years old. I'll be 83 in May. I have lived here a long time.

Elaine: I'm sure you have a lot of neat experiences to share with us.

Helen: I was born May 4, 1925 in Couer d'Alene, Clearwater, Idaho. I was the first of four children. My dad turned fifty years old when I was born. He was forty nine when he married my mother and she was twenty six. There was quite a difference there. They lived in a houseboat on Lake Couer d'Alene, Idaho. Her family apparently was upset about it because she was apparently ill. She never visited her family after she married and moved away. She had one sister that came to visit her here in Vernal. Three of them came to her funeral in 1947.

Elaine: So you were the first of four children?

Helen: I was the first of four. My sister who is just two years younger was born in Montana on June 24, 1927. She lives here in Vernal. Her name is Vernetta Charlotte Reese Holt. She hasn't lived here for fifty years. She married Arthur L. Holt and lived in the Los Angeles area for many years. When he passed away in Oklahoma, she moved back here.

My brother, William Eddy Reese was born two years later on July 24<sup>th</sup> 1929. He was a mail clerk and delivered mail for many years. Many people knew him as so kind and accommodating when delivering the mail.

Ruby LaRaine was born on May 5, 1938. I was thirteen. Ruby married Scott Milton Valora and is the mother of eight girls. Vernal did not have any children by choice and William had nine children. His wife was Laura Smith.

The day that I was born my dad bought some medicine for newborns and I still have the receipts. I didn't have a birth certificate. Mother gave me the receipts when I needed to obtain a birth certificate. I took pictures of those receipts and sent it in to obtain my certificate.

We came to town with a man named Roberts, traveling by auto. We lived in a place next to the Gibson Hotel on Main Street which would be where Grand Valley National Bank is now. I remember going over to the hotel and watching the woman who owned it make beds. She gave me a pan-cake with sugar on it rolled up. It was really tasty.

We also lived in a place next to the city pool just off Vernal Avenue about 2<sup>nd</sup> North. We never did own a home as my parents were very poor. The saying that a shoemakers children go without shoes is true of a carpenter, and his family goes without a home.

Elaine: What brought your father here? What kind of business did he do?

Helen: He was a carpenter, a very good carpenter. He built several homes. But he was a middle-aged man. When my baby sister was born he was 62. She tells me she was kind of embarrassed because her friends thought that he was her grandpa instead of her father. That's pretty old to start out raising a child.

My mother was deaf. She became deaf when she was about 23 years old. She never did hear our voices. I have the same problem, only thank goodness we have hearing aids now. Her condition and mine was caused by the calcification deposits on the stapes and hammer. I have had two operations, one on each ear. I could hear better for awhile and then it ended up I had to have hearing aids. I was reading an article in the paper which stated, "It's good to hear." I thought, yes, it is good to hear, but it sure is nice to sleep by. You can take them out and you don't hear a thing.

Elaine: Tell me some stories about when you were young, and about Vernal.

Helen: I remember when we lived down at the Lemon Place (it's south on Vernal Avenue about 1200 South). It was by Bingham's and I remember going over to Bingham's and playing. They had a daughter my age, named Delyle. Mom must have sent the hired man or the man that was staying with us after me. I didn't want to go home so I hid in the tire swing. He eventually found me and took me home.

We had a rooster that was out in the yard. It was before Willy was born, so I must have been about three. I remember this Rooster. It used to chase me when I'd go outside. It scared the death out of me.

My dad was skilled in brewing spirits. It was during prohibition. He had several men that came for it. He made whiskey and he made beer. There was a man that had white hair and a white beard. I remember sitting on his lap because I liked to look at his beard. My dad got really upset with me and chased me out and said, "Don't you come in the kitchen again when these men are here." Later he talked to me. When I think about it, I think he was probably right, I shouldn't have been in there.

I remember when mom had Willey. We children were taken somewhere to stay over night. Mom had a midwife that came. It seems like the midwife was a lady whose husband had a coal mine (Nygard). I remember mom coming home and mom had this baby boy.

Elaine: Did you live on a farm?

Helen: We did at one time, but my dad wasn't a farmer. We lived on the game farm. It is south of Vernal City. There was a house on it, and it was quite away out. I had turned six and I couldn't go to school because it was too far out and the bus didn't come by, so my parents kept me home and Dad taught me the times tables, which I learned very well before I started school. This proved to really help me because I loved math. I remember one time in the third grade, Miss Wardle's class we used to line up in two lines and she showed a card with the times tables on it and we would give the answer. There was a boy in the class that stuttered really badly. He's a friend of mine now. I would wait and give him a chance to say the answer; he'd try to say it and couldn't get it out, so I'd say it. Poor kid had to sit down. He was very smart, but, I did that to him; that was being mean.

Elaine: No you weren't mean. Helen did you have pets when you was young?

Helen: Yes, I remember one pet we had. It was a dog named Rex. It was during the depression in 1932 or 33. I thought he was kind of mean to other people, but he wasn't mean to us kids. During the depression money was awfully hard to get. Food was scarce; you didn't have any unless you raised it. Apparently my folks raised a garden and had lots of potatoes which they shared with some people who were destitute.

I remember that I had just two dresses and a pair of overalls. I would wear a dress to school and change to my overalls when I got home. Also, first grade was the year that my first grade teacher was killed. Her name was Miss Davis. She was killed in a car accident along with a Duke fellow. It was on the road going to Maeser (500 North) where the road crossed the canal. The bridge had washed out from a flood and the car landed in the canal. Miss Davis went through the roof and it decapitated her. Well, you can imagine what that did to little first graders, scared to death. Someone else taught the rest of the year, but I don't remember who it was.

Elaine: But, you remember her?

Helen: Yes, it was Christmas time, probably New Years.

In the second grade we moved to Naples, a few houses past the Vernal City Cemetery on 500 East next to Chivers. Verna and I walked to school through the fields to the school on what is now Highway 40. Our teacher was Meada Walker. She is Lois Ericson's sister. She lived to be in her nineties.

While we lived in Naples I had a friend that had a horse. I borrowed her horse to go to town to a dental appointment. I was eight years old and in the second grade. I tied the horse to a hitching post in front of Ashton's (a grocery and hardware store). It was up the street from where Zion's Bank is now.

Another time I was walking home, I must have had another appointment. You know that's quite a way for an eight year old to walk alone. It was two miles, maybe three. I was going home and a man driving a team and wagon stopped and asked me if I wanted a ride. I was tickled to death to get it. No one ever told me not to ride with strangers. I sat on a five gallon honey can. He had me sit right by him. He kept putting his hand on my knee. I squirmed, I really squirmed. Apparently, I squirmed enough that I managed to keep out of his reach. Those things happened at that time, but they didn't do anything about it. I had two other episodes that happened, but, I always kept out of their way.

I remember in second grade mom said I could have a birthday party. This was still in Naples. She saw us coming across the field and she said I must have invited every kid in the class. I probably did. She had to put on another pot of rhubarb. We had rhubarb and cake. There were no presents. I don't think that very many kids had parties then. All the kids had to walk to their homes afterward.

From Naples we moved back up to Vernal. In the fourth grade I had Iris White for a teacher. She ended up marrying a Schwobe. In the fifth grade it was Miss Schaeffer. In the sixth grade it was Blaine Lee. In that class there were six or seven Helens. Can you imagine that. We all took our middle name except Helen Woodruff. My middle name is Josephine. When I went into the seventh grade I was delighted to be in Junior High. I really enjoyed it. In fact, I always enjoyed school, I really did. I hated to graduate. So many times you hear people say they hate school.

Elaine: Before we talk about your later school years, who were your friends when you were in grade school.

Helen: I don't recall who my friends were in grade school. They could have been the same one I had in Junior High which were, Colleen Pitt, she moved to Roosevelt, Dorothy Harrison, Gaye Powell and Venna Haws, who is Irvin Haws' sister. She just retired the other day (May 2008). She's a year younger than I am. Doris Preece, who was my husband's first wife. Norma Anderson, (Wardle). She still lives in Vernal. Jeanne Bills, she married Everett Pitt, then she divorced and married Robert Jensen of SLC. She has been really a good friend. In fact we still keep track of each other.

I used to bicycle a lot. I bought myself a bicycle with my baby sitting money. I remember my bicycle got ran over by my dad. I just was beside myself. He said, "Come on, we'll take it and get it fixed." So we took it up and got it fixed. He told me it was partly my fault because I parked it behind his car. I had to take part of the blame and he took part of the blame. That was a lesson learned, I never parked behind a car after that.

Elaine: Where was the Junior High then? You said you were excited to go.

Helen: The High School and Junior High were where the city pool is now on the corner of 1<sup>st</sup> South and 6<sup>th</sup> West.

Elaine: Was it named the Ashley Junior High?

Helen: No, it was called Uintah High School. It went from the seventh to the twelfth grade.

Elaine: Do you remember your teachers in high school?

Helen: Yes, Erva Bowden was one, Electa Caldwell, C.P Lewis, Mr. Jorgenson and Jake Lybert. That reminds me of one time a group of us on our dates stole watermelons. The girls sat in the car while the boys went into the field and got the melons; the boys came rushing back as Mr. Lybert was chasing them. Mr. Lybert told about it the next day in class. We were all trying not to snicker so he wouldn't guess who it was.

Before I graduated I got a job at the bowling alley owned by Dr. Stevens, a dentist. It was pinball. I was in charge of hiring the boys to set pins. They were paid about two cents a line to set them up after the customer knocked them down. One day the laundry lady didn't deliver the towels on time. I was concerned because I didn't have any clean towels. One of my friends said that he would take me over to her place to get them on his bicycle. One of my girlfriends in the B. A. at that time said she would watch the alley for me while I went to get the towels. We weren't gone thirty minutes. The next day Dr. Stevens said I was short in the cash fifty cents. I knew I hadn't made a mistake in giving the change. I couldn't figure out how come I was short. The next day I thought about leaving my friend to watch the place. Dr. Stevens thought that she probably took the money. But, I felt that I was still under suspicion. Lesson learned.

Later on, I went to work for him as a dental assistant. It was a good experience for me. While working for him we had a clinic in Manila and traveled by car over the mountain. The clinic was held in a place that did not have electricity. I was the power for the drill when he was getting the tooth ready to fill. It was a pump machine, pumped like you would on a treadle sewing machine. I had to pump very fast. It was a lot of work.

On the way back to Vernal it had rained and the road was very muddy. He became stuck and we were placing pine boughs in the road by the wheels to give us traction. His feet got so big from the mud, he had big feet anyway, and I started laughing at him. He became furious and threatened to leave me if I didn't stop.

When I quit working for him, it was because of his drinking for he drank a lot. One morning he came to the office, he seemed alright, but he kept going back to the room. We had a patient come and while he was looking in the patient's mouth he said that she had a lot of cavities. I looked and I couldn't see any. She knew she didn't have a lot, just one. When he went to the back room and I said, "Would you like another appointment" She said, "Yes!" It was known that he was an alcoholic. He was a very smart man; he knew several languages, (six or seven I was told). I sent all the patients home with new appointments. He went downstairs for about a half hour and when he came back up he was very drunk. I got him back to the recovery room to lie down and I called his wife. She informed me to dump all the liquor down the sink that I could find. I went through every drawer and cupboard and poured the whiskey down the drain. I quit working for him that day. It was a good job for me while I was going to school. I enjoyed it. I was able to clean teeth because there wasn't any dental hygienist at that time, and no school for them. I was taught by Dr. Stevens. My mother worked for him until her death. She worked in the lab. Then there was some investigation of him. I don't know what it was but the officer asked me about certain instruments that he had. He asked me if I had ever seen any. I said, "No! He hasn't had any here." I knew all my dental instruments so I knew what I was talking

about. He drew a picture of what it was like and I said, "No, I haven't seen that." Somebody had had an abortion and I think they thought he did it. I don't think he ever did.

Elaine: Tell me about the activities you did when you were in high school, such as dances or sports.

Helen: I liked baseball which I felt I was pretty good at pitching, but the girls only played that at P.E. No contest with other schools. Basketball games were very popular. Our teams would compete with other schools. The boys would compete, but not the girls.

Elaine: Do you remember going to dances?

Helen: I don't remember much about those dances.

Elaine: Some of the dances were over at the Imperial Hall.

Helen: I had one boyfriend but I didn't date much until I was out of High School. I dated a lot in SLC where I went to work after high school.

Elaine: How did you meet your husband?

Helen: I used to roller skate a lot. I loved to do that and I became pretty good on skates. We had a roller skating rink. It was the Imperial Hall. It was also called the Orpheus. George Millecam was there, I guess he kind of liked me because he got some roller skates and was skating. He asked me for a date for the three nights of the rodeo. I said, "I'll go with you to the first night." I wasn't going to be tied up with three nights with someone I didn't enjoy our date. I ended up going to all three nights of the rodeo. I had such a good time. I married him on December 31, 1946. Later we went to the Temple and were sealed for all time and eternity.

Elaine: After you got married, where did you live?

Helen: Our first place was at Millecam's Apartments on Eighth West and Main Street. They had apartments first then they changed it into a motel, called Motel 40.

Elaine: Was it the Dine-A-Ville?

Helen: Yes, it was the one we bought from George's folks. We changed the name from Motel 40 to Dine-A-Ville Motel. We lived in a three room apartment. At that time my mother passed away. I'd been married nine months when my mom was diagnosed with stomach cancer. She went to Salt Lake City to find out why she was so sick and couldn't eat. She was diagnosed with cancer which was so bad they wouldn't operate. She lived just one month and died at my place. We took Ruby to live with us as mom and dad were separated. Dad wasn't happy about that because I was married to a Mormon. She was eight years old and the next summer mom's sisters living in the Los Angeles area wanted her to come for the summer. We put her on the

bus in SLC (the bus driver was in charge of watching out for her). She was nine years old. Her aunts met her at the station in Los Angeles. She lived with us until she got married. Dad died six months later in April. He was seventy two. Mom was just 49 when she passed away.

We bought the motel. The folks wanted to get out of it, and offered it to George and I. Since George wanted it I supported him on it. We took over big debt at First Security Bank. We had it one or two years and we decided we had to do something because we weren't making enough money to pay the mortgage and all the other expenses that comes with operating a motel. We decided to move the house and build a pool and also build us some living quarters with three rooms. So, that's what we did. A fellow came through Vernal and said, "I thought I was in a different town." He said, "When I left Vernal, there was nothing like this on this corner. When I came back there was a pink dinosaur, a swimming pool, and new buildings." Things can change in a hurry.

Another year we added eight rooms across the front. We operated it for seventeen years and then sold it. That was our retirement. Having the pool was something that the children loved. They learned to swim and have a lot of fun. Willa Rae earned part of her money for college by teaching children to swim. They were all taught to swim by their dad, as he was an excellent swimmer.

Willa Rae graduated from BYU and teaches at Maeser Elementary. All the children had opportunities to further their education but chose not to. Jerry joined the army after one year at Ogden, Utah State. Melinda married at only sixteen. When Dianna turned sixteen she wanted to marry her boyfriend.

Elaine: So, you have four children?

Helen: Yes, Willa Rae and Melinda graduated the same day, Willa Rae from BYU and Melinda from high school. Willa Rae's was in the morning and Melinda's was in the evening, which made it possible to attend them both. All my children graduated from high school.

Elaine: What are some traditions or special holidays when your children were young?

Helen: We had a tradition in our family on New Year's Eve. I dressed them in swimming suits and made banners with the New Year dated on it and placed it across their bodies and took pictures of them. They took turns with that each year.

At Christmas time, presents were not opened until Christmas morning. They always tried to see what Santa had brought after mom and dad were in bed. We always stopped them from learning much. One year we decided to make a maze up the hall from their rooms to stop them and that worked very well.

Thanksgiving dinner has always been a family thing. That was one tradition that we had until two years ago. I had dinner in our new home and then I said, "That's it. You kids will have to have your own and invite mother." They have a family Thanksgiving and invite mom and her husband, Dellis.

Elaine: Do you remember interesting things happening in Vernal? Do you remember businesses in Vernal? What was Vernal like?

Helen: Nothing really spectacular happened. It was small town atmosphere. We weren't members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. My mother was a Christian Scientist. We did go to church when ever there was Christian Scientists that came here and held church.

Ashton Brother's was a grocery store, a dry good store, a hardware store and a clothing and shoe store. George worked as a grocery clerk. People would come in and stand at the counter and asked for different items. The clerk would round up all the items for them. They even had home delivery. When we were first married we charged our groceries. It was really hard to stop this practice. It took us three or four months to quit. When we finally were able to stop it was really nice to get a full paycheck, money we could spend where we chose.

We had a theater in town, called the Vogue. I remember the lion growling; it still happens on channel 340 at the beginning of the movie.

We rode bicycles when we were in high school. We would take long rides. We would ride up 2500 West to the Rod and Gun Club (it wasn't called that then). We rode out to Brush Creek Cave. That's thirteen miles one way, and by the way no special gears, just had pumping from our legs. We rode horses a lot. I'd get bucked off from horses more times than I could stay on one. I always got back on it. One time George and I were hunting up in Oaks Park. They gave me the horse that was more spirited because George had the gun. My horse didn't want to go where I wanted it to. It kept wanting to turn around. It finally got turned around and then it ran. I had a camera around the neck and it went bump, bump, bump. I was instructed not to talk mean to horse. I was really frustrated because I couldn't get it stopped or turned around. I finally yanked on the reins really hard and said a few words I won't repeat. It stopped. My husband said he expected to find me on the ground because I've always been thrown off before. The horse stayed on the trail and I rode it the rest of the day. I let it know I was in charge from then on.

George and I moved to Salt Lake City with our family. George had a job with Oscar Lyman in construction. We stayed in SLC nearly two years before returning back home.

We moved back and rented a house on Main Street from a Mrs. Helco. In order for us to get the house at a certain rent, she asked George to put down linoleum. When we went to move in the lady said, "By the way, my son who's out here in the trailer living in the back is going to use your bathroom. This didn't set well with us and we looked for another place to rent. (We were living with George's folks). We rented the Workman home out 500 West. It was a nice home with a nice yard.

When I went to work in Salt Lake; I worked for a dentist, Captain Snoddy. It was at the Veteran's Hospital. It was a good job which I liked very much. While working there the FBI came around and took each employee's fingerprints. I was asked if I wanted to apply for a job with the FBI. No one from the Veteran Administration went to work with them at that time. I joined the Waves when I worked for the Veterans Administration.

Elaine: What's that?



Helen: It's the navy part of the United States Armed Forces for the women. When I joined a picture was taken of me for the recruiters for the newspaper. I decided to leave Vernal early and stop and visit my half-brother in Jewel, Iowa. While I was there the war ended and I was hoping for a discharge. I did receive my discharge and returned to Vernal. The reason I enlisted was I had a desire to be a nurse and they promised that I would receive training for a nurse.

Elaine: So, you didn't get a chance to start the training.

Helen: No, I did not get into training. I just visited with my brother and waited for my papers to tell me where I was to go. The war was over and I wanted to go home. I had a boyfriend that was in the Marine Corp and I figured he would be coming home. That was the main reason I wanted to come home. He didn't get discharged however. He never did tell me why. I met George Millecam and married him. When my marine friend did come home he came to see me and said, "Well, I see you still have a nice slim body." I said, "Why shouldn't I?" I think he thought I had to get married. He never told me why he didn't come home right after the war ended, but instead got sent back overseas.

Elaine: I read some articles about the dinosaurs you and your husband made.

Helen: My husband made those dinosaurs. I didn't have anything to do with them artistically. He made five of them. It was the first time he had ever done anything like that. It was a remarkable job. It was after we had our pink Dinah sign for the motel. We had purchased the field next to the motel on east side. That is where he built them. One is here in Vernal at 800 West Main across from where the motel used to be. Two of them are in Dinosaur, Colorado. I think the fifth one is in Dinosaur, also

Elaine: Did he build the pink dinosaur or did he just have it brought in?

Helen: No, we paid \$12,000 to have that built. At that time, that was a lot of money, at least I thought it was. They put an article in the paper within the last two years that indicated I had made the design, but I did not. It was taken from the design of the Chamber of Commerce's Dinah. I just made the tail straight.

Elaine: You drew it from that?

Helen: I modeled it from clay using that Dinah as a model. I have the model here minus the tail which had broken off and I lost it. This is the Dinah that I modeled it from but made the tail straight as they needed a straight tail. (I showed Elaine the Dinah that I made it from) I was upset that they had indicated that I had designed the original one. Dinosaur Land had given us permission to have it made professionally. Now it is down in front of my sister's place on the curve in the highway at the east end of Main Street.

Ruby and I joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints at the same time. Our missionary teachers were Sarah Richardson and Betty Hein. Ruby has raised eight girls. A good

many have college educations and all are doing very well. Ruby's husband is Milton Scott Valora from Rangely.

I have twenty-two grandchildren and about thirty-one great grandchildren. There is over fifty that are members of the LDS church as a result of me being baptized.

On the corner of 100 S. 100 W. was a red brick house that the L. T. Peytons owned. Mrs. Peyton had made several rooms in the basement by portioning them into 6 X 7 feet cubicles, just room for a twin bed, a closet rod and a chest of drawers. She rented the rooms for twenty five dollars a month to unmarried girls. It was a lovely home; that is where I was married. The house has been moved now.

George and I were sealed in the Salt Lake Temple for eternity in 1964 when our children were young and could be sealed to us as a family. My girls are active in the Church. My boy is not active at this time, but at some time he will be. We are promised if we have taught them right that they will come back into the gospel whether it's in this life or the next. I'm really glad I joined the LDS Church. I am a better person for it and more outgoing and content with myself. I married a great man and am glad that I will be with him for all eternity. The man that I'm married to now is also wonderful and kind.

My first husband, George and I, served a mission in Nauvoo, Illinois, for eighteen months. We were rovers the last nine months. We were tour guides and served in many different homes and places. As rovers we would serve in different places to give the guides a day off. We learned thirteen different scripts. Those twelve were a lot easier to learn than that number one, at the MTC. We had a hard time learning that one. We really enjoyed our mission.

Elaine: Since you were in the motel business did you meet interesting people? What were some of your experiences?

Helen: We had one man that came and stayed with us. He was an insurance salesman. He had a girlfriend in Vernal that came and stayed with him in the motel room. We didn't like that. That wasn't what our motel was supposed to be. We knew he was married because he sent money to his wife. He'd call her up using office phone. We didn't have phones in the rooms at that time. He'd call her and tell her he was sending her some money. That is how I learned he was married. We told him he couldn't stay there anymore. That's hard when you are fighting for every dollar you get and need it. But, we just couldn't tolerate that kind of behavior.

People were mostly nice, especially after they'd been to the room and rested for awhile, then came to the office. Some would come in to rent a room with a chip on their shoulders; one had to be very careful not to offend them. It's not that much fun to work with the public in the service business, because they've been traveling all day long and they are tired and kind of ornery. But, if you handle the situation right, they come around.

Elaine: Do you remember any big community events like the opening of the dam or other things?

Helen: Yes, we went up to a ceremony at Flaming Gorge. I know that it was on the twenty-fifth of May 1980. We had stopped to ask Diana if she and her children would like to go with us and she didn't want to go, as she had something she wanted to do. We spent the day and came

home. As I walked in the back door, there was a note on the door that said, "Call Maxfields, Blair has had an accident. The phone was ringing as we went in and my son-in-law, Doug Barlow, Melinda's husband, said, "There's been an accident. Blair's been killed." Can you imagine how we felt. Diana was down at Maxfields. We went right down to Alden and Marge Maxfields. That was one of the hardest times to go through. To see our youngest daughter, who was just twenty four years old, loose her husband because of an accident. It was really hard. We went out every day, sometimes twice a day, for over one year. We lived in Air Village Hill at that time. It was five miles to her place one way. She was a strong person. She was pregnant with their third child. They had just built a new home. George had helped them since we were in the cedar home business at the time. He helped them build their home. It was a cedar home which we had sold to them as a home package.

Elaine: Tell me your children's names starting with the oldest.

Helen: Willa Rae Dillworth married Kenneth Dillworth of Burley, Idaho. Jerry George Millecam lives in Landle Lakes, Florida (single). Melinda Barlow married Douglas Barlow. Dianna Hamblin married Blair Maxfield and when he was killed, she married Dave Hamblin. They live in St. George, Utah.

When my boy was born he was RH negative sensitized. I have RH negative blood and he was born with RH positive, that caused antibodies from negative blood to build up in his body. In other words my blood was trying to destroy his. He was taken to the University Hospital in SLC where they were experimenting with the RH factor. He was in there twenty one days after receiving ACTH. I don't know what that stands for, probably was told but I didn't retain it in my memory. Melinda also was affected but she received transfusions instead. Diana the same way, but she received transfusions through the veins in her navel. All were healthy babies after their treatments. Our hospital bill for Jerry was just five dollars a day for twenty-one days. That's a lot different than it is now. Jerry and Melinda were both born in Salt Lake City.

Elaine: How many grandchildren do you have?

Helen: I have twenty two and thirty five great grandchildren on my side. If I count Dellis', I have four more grandchildren and one additional great grandchild. When my first grandchild was born I was not happy about it. I said, "I'm too young to be a grandmother." I was forty years old. My first one was Melinda's, Julie, and three weeks later Willa Rae gave birth to a girl, Janice. Those two were very close together. All my girls have good husbands and nice families. Willa Rae had nine children, Melinda five and Diana three, with tow adopted Korean children, a sister and brother. Jerry has three children.

Life has been good to me. I don't regret anything that I've gone through, even when we were sorrowing. When one has a job that is dangerous, then you have to accept it and learn from it. I think that the adversity that I have had in my life has strengthened me in more than one way. I ran for Vernal City Council once. I wasn't a good politician. I didn't realize how many people didn't know me. I thought I was better known than I was. One has to get out and let the public know what you stand for and who you are. I learned a lot from that experience.

Elaine: Do you remember some other involvement in the community?

Helen: Yes, I was elected Uintah County Republican Vice-Chairwoman when Dr. Seager was County chairman. I enjoyed being involved in politics that way. In church I was Relief Society President for six years. I was twice. Once for two years, and then we were called on a mission to Nauvoo, Illinois. When we returned I was called again to be president. That time for four years. It was a rewarding experience. It's not one that I would have wanted; but when called we accept and do our best to fulfill our duties. The second time I was called by the Bishop was when Willa Rae was being taken to the hospital in Salt Lake by ambulance after having her ninth child. That night her husband ate supper with us. He didn't tell me at that time as the Bishop was visiting, I thought because of Willa's problem. When he explained why he was there, I remember saying, "Well, let me think about it." Then I remembered the blessings I needed for my family and said that I would do it. I couldn't choose any counselors at that time. He called me on Saturday and said he needed to know and informed me to choose who I wanted because he needed to sustain me the next day. I thought, "Why does he have to." I couldn't figure it out. The sister that was president had only been in one year. I called him back a couple hours later after I had prayed about it. I had some in mind but I wasn't sure. On Sunday I found out why the urgency. After he had presented my name to the congregation and I was sustained as Relief Society President he sat down and the Stake President, Gayle McKeachnie, got up. He made some remark about me being called as Relief Society President. He had called me as Relief Society President once when he was bishop. He was only bishop for three months when he was called as Stake President. After the new bishop was sustained I asked him if he knew about my calling. He said, "No, but that's all right." The new Bishop was Valoy Eaton. It's a job and one that you learn a lot from, but it's not one that you actively want. Melinda has been a Relief Society President and Willa Rae is serving in her ward now and teaches school. She's a very busy person.

Elaine: What are some of your fondest memories?

Helen: I think that our Mission was one that would say was an enjoyable experience. I have enjoyed life. I had a good life, a good family and two good husbands. We didn't have a lot of money but I had enough for our needs and a few wants.

Elaine: What have you learned from your life's experiences? You've lived almost eighty three years; what have you learned from that?

Helen: One thing that I would admonish all young people to do is get an education. I would have gone on to college if I'd had the money. I was second in line for a scholarship. I think the reason I didn't get a scholarship to BYU was because I didn't have any church experience. I wasn't a member at the time. The girl that the scholarship had the same grade averages that I did. I think your education is very important.

I am grateful that I joined the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. I guess I would say that the experience that I'm grateful for was the opportunity to go on a mission. That's an opportunity I didn't think I would be blessed with because my husband, George, was not an

active member. When he became very active and expressed a desire to serve a mission I was pleased, maybe I should say tickled. I would say that, that was one of the highlights of both our lives, our mission. We served as tour guides and I taught art lessons for nine months.

Elaine: You didn't tell me that you painted.

Helen: Yes, I painted all these pictures in here. We did a lot of things that normally missionaries didn't get to do. We were in a play comprised of several skits at the cultural hall in Nauvoo. We acted in the skit that was called Pickle Barrel. I was a friend of this fellow that was trying to give me a Book of Mormon and I wouldn't accept it. It was a short skit about ten to fifteen minutes long. It was interesting; I enjoyed it very much. I think my husband enjoyed it too although he had breathing problems sometimes. I remember one time when he had been changing the scene on the stage for our skit. I came on from the audience and when I looked at him and I almost laughed out loud. He was just drenched with sweat. He was in a hurry to move all the stuff and he had a hard time breathing.

When we auditioned and had the part the sister in charge said, "We're going to learn to sing some songs about Nauvoo. We will sing them as a choir group." I said, "That lets me out, I can't sing." She said, "Oh, yes you can! You're going to do it! You have to!" So we did it. I can say I was in one choir in my life. The songs were fun songs. We put the show on each night. That was fun. I would say that was the highlight in my life serving in Nauvoo.

Elaine: Are there any other experiences you would like to share?

Helen: I have belonged to a Progressive Arts Club since 1949, which is a civic club. Some girls from the club asked me if I wanted to get married a gain. I said, "No way do I want to get married again." I said, "I do not like cooking for just two." And, I love to cook, but I don't like to cook for two. And I said, "I can eat when I want and I don't have to cook regular meals. If I want to stand up at the counter and eat I can.

When Dellis asked me for a date, Willa Rae and I were going to go to the show at the Western Park. I knew Dellis, he was my friend Doris' husband, She had passed away in 1998.. He had just come back from being in Arizona for the winter. I had gone to the Golden Age Center to eat lunch and sat by him. I did a lot of talking but he didn't say much. He never does. As I was going to my car I heard someone calling, "Helen, Helen". It was Dellis. He asked me if I had seen the show at Western Park. I said, "No, Willa and I were going tonight." "Would you go with me?" he asked. I thought to myself, "It's a chance to save \$5" and I said yes. I called my daughter and said, "Willa Rae, I've got a date tonight." She said, "You've got a date!" I said, "Yes!" She said, "Okay!"

When we got there all my girlfriends were there. I was embarrassed. I hadn't dated for fifty three years, and to all at once date. He kind of nudged up close to me and asked if I wanted anything to drink. I said, "No, I don't want anything." He said, "Well, I'm going to go get me one." "Bring me a water then", My girlfriends were really smiling and talking.

We dated through the rest of the summer and were married September 18 1999. It just happened. I had no intension of seeking another husband, but we have enjoyed one another.

I had bought a condo over on 12<sup>th</sup> North and Vernal Ave. George had instructed me not to buy one of those condos because of the flood area being near the Ashley Creek. I had sold my home in Air Village Hills and needed a place to live. I had looked at many places but nothing appealed to me until I looked at Dan and Barbara Coney's condo. I had put a limit on what I wanted to spend for a home and I held to it. I had finished my home, painted every room in it, 3,600 feet, and sold it. I wanted to save part of the money from the sale. As I was coming down the stairs I offered them \$65,000. They were asking \$70,000. Dan said, "Okay, Helen, we'll sell it for \$65." I had bought myself a condo. When I left, I thought, "Helen, you just bought a condo where George told you not to buy."

Dellis wanted to know where we would live. I said the condo. He put his home on the market and sold it. He feels badly about selling it. Someone asked me if I felt bad about selling my home which George and I had built and lived in for twenty five years I remarked that it was a nice home and I had really loved it. But one shouldn't be in love with material things. I like the home that Dellis and I had built for it's our home and paid for. We agreed to each put in so much money and build it. I sold the condo and put the money into this home. Dellis is a kind man, kind to me and to everyone he meets.